

Central Park

*A Guide and
a History*

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SEYMOUR DURST

t' Fort nieuw Amsterdam op de Manhatans



FORT NEW AMSTERDAM



(NEW YORK), 1651

When you leave, please leave this book
Because it has been said
"Ever'thing comes t' him who waits
Except a loaned book."

✓ AVERY
DURST

Central Park

IN its present state of cultivated perfection it is difficult to realize that Central Park was ever anything but beautiful. Yet, some fifty odd years ago, the 843 acres now included in the park were nothing more than a wilderness of barren rocks and stagnant swamps in which tribes of squalid city barbarians encamped to ply the trades of cinder-sifting, rag-picking and bone-boiling.

In 1856, however, the city purchased this tract of land at an average price of \$7,300 an acre, the total cost (including the subsequent extension to 110th St.) amounting to more than \$6,000,000. In bringing the park to its present condition, which was largely accomplished under the direction of Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux, landscape architects, between 25 and 30 millions were spent, and the cost of maintenance now necessitates an annual expenditure of almost \$300,000.

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Central Park extends from 59th to 110th Sts. (a distance of over $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles) and from Fifth Ave. to Eighth Ave. (about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile). Within its boundaries are 9 miles of roads, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles of bridle paths and 31 miles of walks. Four sunken transverse roads for business traffic cut the park from east to west. There are nineteen entrances, the main one being at 59th St. and Fifth Ave. This entrance and the two at 59th St. and Seventh Ave. and 66th St. and Eighth Ave. are flanked by bridle paths, and during the spring and fall hundreds of equestrians take their mounts at these gates for their daily ride in the park.

Central Park abounds in bird life. Flocks of grackles and starlings wander over the lawns. Thousands of gulls gather on the waters of the reservoirs, and during the migratory periods birds of many and rare species are seen in the less frequented portions of the park. Hundreds of squirrels frisk about the grounds. Most of them are very tame and the children as well as adults enjoy feeding these pretty little animals.

The park is noted for the variety and beauty of its vegetation, more than 125 different species of trees, shrubs and vines flourishing within its limits.

In 1909 Mrs. Russell Sage gave to the park 6,000 rhododendron bushes, costing \$67,000. These shrubs have been planted along the East Drive between 85th and 96th Sts. Over 1,000 Japanese cherry trees, a recent gift of the Japanese Government, are also growing in the eastern side of the park. "Trees and Shrubs of Central Park," by L. H. Peet, may be bought for \$2.00 at any of the larger book stores in the city.



The Morning Canter



May Day in the Park

Interesting Points in Central Park

The Metropolitan Museum of Art—At Fifth Ave. and 82nd St. It is the most famous art museum in America and one of the greatest in the world. Free to the public, except Monday and Friday, when an admission fee of 25 cents is charged. Open Sunday 1-6 p. m.; other days, 10 a. m.-5 p. m. in winter, and 10 a. m.-6 p. m. in summer, but on Saturdays throughout the year the Museum is open until 10 o'clock at night.

The original red brick building was opened in 1880, but since that time many additions have been built, and the Fifth Ave. front now stretches from 81st to 84th Sts. A new wing, which will hold the J. Pierpont Morgan collection of art objects, valued at \$50,000,000, is now in course of construction. When completed, in accordance with the original plans, the entire group of buildings will cover an area of 18½ acres, and will have cost approximately \$20,000,000.

Broadly speaking, the first floor is filled with Egyptian and Classical col-

lections of architectural and sculptural plaster casts, as well as modern sculpture, including many of the best known works of Auguste Rodin. The second floor contains exhibits of textiles, laces, arms and armor, musical instruments and paintings of the East, Near East, Europe and America. The Decorative Arts, which include woodwork, metalwork, ceramics, etc., occupy a wing by themselves. In the picture galleries the attempt is made to illustrate the history of painting in antiquity, and from the Middle Ages to the present time, with especial attention to the work of American artists. The paintings are also arranged as nearly as possible according to schools, but several rooms contain entire collections of individual donors.

To reach the Museum, take a Bus to Fifth Ave. and 82nd St.

The Obelisk or Cleopatra's Needle—

Located directly west of the Museum. It is an Egyptian monument of the 16th Century B. C., and was originally erected by Thothmes III before the Temple of the Sun in Heliopolis, near Cairo. Two hundred years later Rameses II, the Pharaoh of the Bible, added inscriptions



Face to Face with Antiquity

to it setting forth his own achievements; and four centuries after another Pharaoh, Osarkon I, recorded his deeds along with those of Thothmes and Rameses. The center column of hieroglyphics on each face are those of Thothmes III. The sun-god Horus was symbolized by the sparrow hawk and this figure may be recognized at the top of each column.

In 12 B. C. this obelisk and a com-

panion one, now standing on the Thames Embankment, London, were removed to Alexandria by Augustus Cæsar. The crabs at the base are reproductions of the bronze crabs which supported it during its sojourn in that city. Two of the originals are now in the Museum. In 1877 the Khedive of Egypt presented the obelisk to the United States, and in 1880 it was brought to New York.

The obelisk is a granite monolith $69\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length and weighs 224 tons. Its transportation to this country required a special vessel with novel machinery. How the Egyptians quarried it, carried it over a thousand miles from Syene to Heliopolis and successfully erected it there, still remains one of the unsolved mysteries of antiquity.

To reach the Obelisk, take a Bus to Fifth Ave. and 79th St. and then follow the path leading in a northwesterly direction.

The Croton Reservoirs—In the center of the park between 79th and 96th Sts. The smaller reservoir, which was constructed before the park was laid out, holds 250 million gallons of water, has a depth of 30 feet at one end and 20 at the other, and a surface area of 31 acres.



*Larger Reservoir—Showing Water
Gates*

The larger reservoir, which was built simultaneously with the park, has a capacity of 1,000 million gallons, a depth of 36 feet and a surface area of 96 acres. These two receiving reservoirs, which formerly furnished New York's entire water supply, now merely distribute throughout the city 144 million gallons a day—a little more than half the daily water consumption of the Borough of Manhattan.

The foot path around the reservoirs is a favorite resort of many well-known New Yorkers.

To reach the Reservoirs, take a Bus to the Fifth Ave. and 79th, 85th, 90th or 96th St. Entrances.



A Sunday Concert on the Mall



Looking North Along the Mall

The Mall—The Southern end commences at 65th St. where the **MAIN DRIVE** divides to the East and West Drives. It is a broad promenade, one third of a mile long, flanked by a double row of stately elms. On the right are bronze statues of Shakespeare, Scott, Fitz-Greene Halleck and Beethoven, and on the left, Columbus and Burns. Near the northern end is the **Music Pavilion** and **Concert Ground**, where the children's pony and donkey carriages are stationed. **Band Concerts** are given on various afternoons and evenings throughout the summer. On the cliff directly



The Casino

east of the Concert Ground is the wistaria arbor. The vines which cover this rustic pergola, as well as those on the arch at the West 72nd St. Gate, make a beautiful sight during the latter part of May and early June, when their flowers are in full bloom.

The Casino—A French Restaurant, of the Bois de Boulogne type, charmingly located on a knoll behind the wistaria arbor. In this vine-covered, stone cottage, with its attractive terrace for use in spring and summer and its winter sun parlor, good meals are excellently served at all times.

To reach the Casino, take a Bus to the Fifth Ave. and 72nd St. Entrance and walk a hundred yards west.



The Terrace

The Terrace and the Bethesda Fountain—The Terrace is a magnificent screen-work of Albert Freestone at the northern end of The Mall, overlooking The Lake. The Fountain, the chief architectural feature of the park, is located at the foot of The Terrace on The Esplanade. The figure of the angel blessing the waters was suggested by the story of Bethesda in the Bible (St. John 5:2-4). The smaller figures represent Temperance, Purity, Health and Peace.

To reach the southern end of The Mall, take a Bus to the Fifth Ave. and 59th St. Entrance. Then follow the Drive six blocks north.

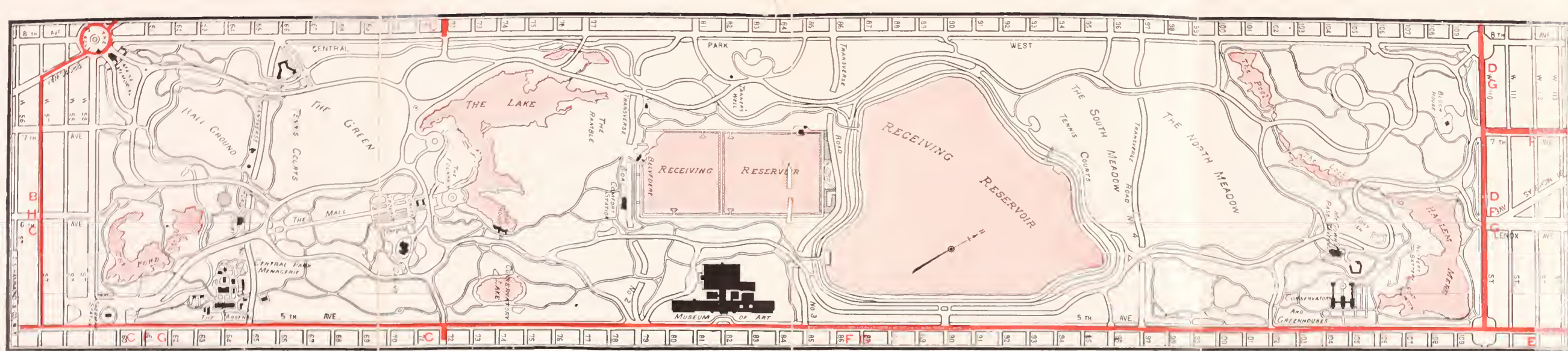
To reach the northern end, take a Bus to Fifth Avenue and 72nd St. and walk west.



The Animal Cages

The Menagerie and Arsenal—At 64th St. and Fifth Ave. The large building around which the menagerie houses are located was the New York State Arsenal during the Civil War. As indicated by a tablet over the main entrance, it was built in 1848. It now contains the offices of the Park Police Force as well as the store rooms of the Park Department. The menagerie contains a large and varied collection of wild animals, birds, etc.

The Menagerie and Arsenal may be reached by taking a Bus to Fifth Ave. and 64th St., or by riding only as far as the 59th St. Entrance and then walking north along the path at the right of the Drive.



MAP OF CENTRAL PARK (BUS LINES IN RED) For Key to Bus Lines, see back pages.



The visitor to Central Park will always find much to interest him



Awaiting their Turn

The Lake—Covers an area of 20 acres and is used for boating and skating. During the spring and summer months rowboats may be hired at the boat-house, which is only a short distance east of the Esplanade. In winter, when the ice is safe, public skating is permitted.

To reach the Lake, take a Bus to either 72nd St. Entrance.





Water Fowl

The Pond—A small lake picturesquely set among the rocks in the extreme southeastern corner of the park. A large flock of ducks, geese and swans are confined to its northern arm. Children under sixteen are allowed to skate on the lower half of this pond. During the summer months the circuit of this lake may be made in the "Swan Boats." A small fee is charged.

The Ramble and Cave—North of the Lake and south of the smaller reservoir is a maze of winding paths, thickets, streams and rustic bridges, known as The Ramble. Two of the trails lead to the Cave, a natural rock formation at the southwestern corner.

Take a Bus to the East 72nd or 79th St. Entrance.

The Belvedere—A Norman Gothic structure on a rocky elevation at the southwestern corner of the smaller reservoir. From its observation tower, the highest point in the park, a commanding view can be obtained.



The Sherman Statue

The Sherman Statue—A monument of especial interest located at the Main Entrance of the park. This statue, a colossal equestrian figure of General Wm. T. Sherman, is one of the most recent works of the late Augustus St. Gaudens.

To reach the Sherman Statue, take a Bus to the Fifth Ave. and 59th St. Entrance.



Embryo Yachtsmen—A Noted Fifth Avenue Home in the Background

The Miniature Yacht Lake—East of the main lake between 73rd and 75th Sts. Boys use this small pond for sailing miniature yachts, and in the winter it is used by fancy skaters.

To reach this Lake, take a Bus to Fifth Ave. and 72nd St.

The Maine Memorial—Facing Columbus Circle at the Eighth Ave. and 59th St. Entrance. This monument, erected by popular subscription, is the work of H. Van Buren Magonigle and Attilio Piccirilli, architect and sculptor, respectively.



The Maine Memorial

The principal motive is a pylon flanked by two colossi representing the Atlantic and Pacific and suggestive of the National scope of the memorial. At the foot of this shaft and facing the Circle is a group of sculpture, ante-bellum in idea—Courage awaiting the Flight of Peace, while Fortitude supports the feeble. Supporting this group is a conventional boat prow and extending in front is a low fountain basin. At the rear, facing the park, is a corresponding group post-bellum in motive—Justice, having entrusted her sword to the Genius of War to execute her mandates, receives it again while History records its deeds. The pylon is crowned by a group representing Columbia Triumphant, which is cast in bronze from the guns recovered from the sunken Maine. The rest of the monument is in marble and granite. The memorial, including the foundations and flanking façades, cost approximately \$175,000.

To reach the Maine Memorial, take a Bus to Columbus Circle.



*Bird's-eye View of the Green—Looking Southeast—Plaza Hotel in Upper
Right-hand Corner*

Other Park Monuments—In addition to the six monuments along The Mall, space permits mention only of the following: The bronze figure of Commerce on the West Drive north of the Maine Memorial, the granite statue of ALEXANDER HAMILTON on the East Drive north of the Metropolitan Museum, the bronze statue of DANIEL WEBSTER on the West Drive near 72nd St., the bronze bust of ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT near the Fifth Ave. and 59th St. Entrance, The Pilgrim by J. Q. A. Ward near the East 72nd St. Entrance, Fratin's Eagles and Goat and Ward's Indian Hunter on the lawns west of The Mall, the bronze bust of Schiller in the Ramble, the bronze statue of Thorwaldsen at the East 96th St. Entrance, the Seventh Regiment Statue on the West Drive near 69th St., the large bronze statue of PROFESSOR S. F. B. MORSE, inventor of the telegraph, and the RICHARD M. HUNT MEMORIAL, the former near Fifth Ave. and 72nd St. and the latter at Fifth Ave. between 70th and 71st Sts.

The Green—West of The Mall between the Main and West Drives. Across the southern end of the Green

there are 38 public tennis courts, and 29 more have recently been built on the South Meadow (between 93rd and 97th Sts.). The Ball Ground is directly south of the Green, and just beyond its north-eastern corner are the **Carousel** and **Swings** for children.

To reach these attractions, take a Bus to the East 65th St., Columbus Circle or West 72nd St. Entrances.



Dorset Sheep

The Sheep Fold—On the right hand side of the 66th St. and Eighth Ave. Entrance. A large flock of Dorset sheep is housed in one half of this structure and the park's mounted police force has its headquarters in the other wing. The Park Stables, however, are situated north of the smaller reservoir on the southern side of the 86th St. Transverse Road.

McGown's Pass Tavern—In the northeastern corner of the park on what was originally the oldest and longest thoroughfare on Manhattan Island. The first tavern on this site was erected in 1748. Between 1776 and 1783 it was held continuously by the British troops, and during the Civil War it was used as a hospital for wounded soldiers. This tavern was recently closed.

To reach the Tavern, take a Bus to Fifth Ave. and 102nd St., then follow the path leading northwest.

Fort Fish, Nutter's Battery and Fort Clinton—Between 106th and 107th Sts., south of Harlem Mere. A tablet at the base of one of Fort Clinton's cannons reads as follows:

"This eminence, commanding McGown's Pass, was occupied by British Troops September 15th, 1776, and evacuated November 18th, 1783. Here, beginning August 18th, 1814, the citizens of New York built Fort Clinton for the defence of the City in the Second War with Great Britain. This tablet is erected by the Children of the City History Club of New York, A. D. 1906."

Fort Fish and Nutter's Battery were designed with Fort Clinton in 1814.

Conservatory and Greenhouses—At Fifth Ave. between 104th and 106th Sts. Floral exhibitions are held every Easter and chrysanthemum shows every Thanksgiving. These Greenhouses are open to the public from 10 a. m.-4 p. m.

To reach the Greenhouses, take a Bus to Fifth Ave. and 105th St.

The Blockhouse—Overlooking the Seventh Ave. and 110th St. Entrance. On the west side of this building is a tablet which bears the following inscription:

“This blockhouse was part of a line of fortifications extending from the Hudson to the Harlem Rivers. Built for the defence of New York by its patriotic citizens during the War of 1812-1815. This tablet is erected by the Woman's Auxiliary to the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, A.D. 1905.”

To reach The Blockhouse, take a Bus to Seventh Ave. and 110th St.

The Fire Telegraph Station—Located on the 79th St. Transverse Road, directly south of the smaller reservoir.

It is the central station for the entire city. Recently erected, it was placed in the park to remove it beyond the scope of any possible conflagration.



Young Equestrians

Tanner's Well—Near the path which turns off the West Drive at 82nd St. Many take bottles of this spring water away, for it is thought to contain mineral deposits of unusual medicinal powers.

"The Swiss Cottage"—Near the western boundary of the park, half way between the 81st and 77th St. Entrances. Erroneously named, for the building which is a Swedish schoolhouse and not a Swiss chalet, originally appeared in this country as Sweden's exhibit at the

great Centennial held at Philadelphia in 1876. After the close of this fair, it was taken to pieces—an easy task, as there was not a nail in a single board or beam—and brought to New York as a present from the Swedish government. For many years this “Swiss Cottage” served as a park recreation house, but it is now used as the laboratory of Dr. E. B. Southwick, the city’s entomologist.

"OPEN AIR TO EVERYWHERE"

MOTOR OMNIBUS LINES

A—Washington Square and Bleecker St. "L" Station

South Fifth Avenue "Shuttle" service leaves Washington Square from 8 a. m. to 7 p. m., every 5 to 10 minutes, daily, except Sunday. Running time, 4 minutes.

B—Washington Square and Riverside Drive

Fifth Avenue, from Washington Square to 57th Street, to Broadway, to 72nd Street, to Riverside Drive, to 135th Street, to Broadway.

Leave 135th Street, weekdays, from 7.20 a. m. to 8.45 a. m. and from 2.30 p. m. to 11 p. m., every 5 to 10 minutes (between 8.45 a. m. and 2.30 p. m., buses run from 96th Street only). Sundays, from 8 a. m. to 11 p. m., every 3 to 10 minutes. Running time, 48, 52, 58 minutes. Distinguishing Sign, Red—White letters.

C—Seventy-second Street Crosstown

East 72nd Street, from First Avenue to Fifth Avenue, to 57th Street, to Broadway, to West 72nd Street, to Central Park West.

Leave First Avenue every 11 minutes from 8 a. m. to 11.44 p. m. Leave Central Park West every 11 minutes from 8.22 a. m. to 12.05 a. m. Running time, 21 minutes. Distinguishing Signs, Westbound, White—Red letters. Eastbound, Black—White letters.

D—Cathedral Parkway and Riverside Drive

110th Street, from Fifth Avenue to Riverside Drive, to 135th Street, to Broadway.

Leave 135th Street and Broadway from 8.05 a. m. to 12.25 a. m., every 10 minutes. Running time, 14 minutes. Distinguishing Sign, Blue—White letters. This line makes connection at 110th Street and Fifth Avenue with buses of the Seventh Avenue and St. Nicholas Avenue lines from and to Washington Square.

E—Fifth Avenue—135th Street

Fifth Avenue, from 110th Street to 120th Street, to Mt. Morris Park West, to 124th Street, to Fifth Avenue, to 135th Street.

Leave 135th Street from 7 a. m. to 11 p. m., every 10 to 20 minutes. Running time, 135th Street to 110th Street, 9 minutes. Distinguishing Sign, Green—White letters. This line makes connection at 110th Street and Fifth Avenue with buses of the Seventh Avenue and St. Nicholas Avenue lines from and to Washington Square.

F—Washington Sq.—Seventh Ave.—Polo Gds.
Fifth Avenue, from Washington Square to 110th Street,
to Seventh Avenue, to 153rd Street, to Macomb's Dam
Road, to 155th Street Viaduct, to St. Nicholas Place.

Leave St. Nicholas Place from 6.56 a. m. to 11.11 p. m.,
every 5 minutes. Sundays, 8 a. m. to 11 p. m., every 5
to 10 minutes. Running time, 49, 53, 59 minutes.
Distinguishing Sign, White—Black letters.

**G—Washington Sq.—St. Nicholas Ave.—Polo
Grounds**

Fifth Avenue, from Washington Square to 110th Street,
to Manhattan Avenue, to St. Nicholas Avenue, to St.
Nicholas Place, to 155th Street.

Leave 155th Street from 6.58 a. m. until 12.50 a. m.,
every 5 to 8½ minutes. Sundays 8.00 a. m. to 12.50
a. m., every 4 to 10 minutes. After 6 p. m. 'buses do
not run through, but transfer to 'buses of the Seventh
Avenue line at Fifth Avenue and 110th Street. Run-
ning time, 49, 53, 59 minutes. Distinguishing Sign,
Yellow—Black letters.

H—Pennsylvania Station and Riverside Drive
32nd Street from Pennsylvania Station (Seventh Avenue
entrance) to Fifth Avenue, to 57th Street, to Broadway,
to 72nd Street, to Riverside Drive, to 135th Street, to
Broadway.

Leave 135th Street from 7.15 a. m. to 10.55 p. m., every
5 to 10 minutes. Sundays, from 8.05 a. m. to 10.55
p. m., every 3 to 10 minutes. Running time, 43, 46, 51
minutes. Distinguishing Signs, Northbound, Red—
White letters. Southbound, Black—White letters.

FREE TRANSFERS *to go in one general direction* are
issued from 'bus to 'bus at intermediate terminals, and
also at the following points: At Fifth Avenue and 32nd
Street between line H and all lines on Fifth Avenue.
At Fifth Avenue and 72nd Street between line C and
all lines on Fifth Avenue. At Broadway and 72nd
Street between line C and both Riverside Drive lines.
Transfers from lines C, D and E, and from line G after
6 p. m., must be obtained from the conductor when
paying fare. From other lines they are given by transfer
agents stationed on the street at intersections.

RUNNING TIME varies according to the volume and
congestion of the traffic on Fifth Avenue south of
57th Street. Maximum, in effect, 2.30 p. m.—6 p. m.
weekdays; intermediate, 7 a. m.—2.30 p. m. weekdays;
minimum, after 6 p. m., and on Sundays and holidays.

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